



Testimony of John D. Blair, Associate Counsel
Connecticut Business and Industry Association
Commerce Committee Public Hearing
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Senator Hartley, Representative Currey, Senator Martin, Representative Buckbee, members of the Commerce Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. My name is John Blair, Associate Counsel at the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA is Connecticut's largest business organization, with thousands of member companies, small and large, representing a diverse range of industries from across the state. Ninety-five percent of our member companies are small businesses, with less than 100 employees.

CBIA provides the following testimony regarding **SB 99 ' AAC Establishing a Working Group to Study Remote Notarial Acts and The Revised Uniform Law on Notarial Act'.**

As we emerge from the pandemic, businesses and employees continue to find ways to adapt and conduct everyday business matters. We at CBIA support proposals that foster stronger and more efficient business practices. The RON proposal, if passed, would signal to businesses that Connecticut policy makers recognize that RON laws create efficiencies and result in cost savings. It is these kinds of legislative proposals that result in businesses choosing to come to Connecticut and encourage businesses to stay in Connecticut.

Remote online notarization uniform acts have been passed by 40 other states. The pandemic has accelerated the passage of RON laws throughout the country. The laws have allowed for more timely and effective business practices as we step into a more remote and digital age. These kinds of laws benefit both businesses and consumers alike.

It is important to note that RON acts have helped to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many people were and continue to be concerned about catching the disease from in-person meetings — including notarizations. Because remote online notarizations allow signers and notaries to communicate remotely without physical proximity, RON eliminates any risk of the virus spreading during a notarization appointment.

Under the new laws, notaries are able to work more efficiently and reduce expenses. RON eliminates many time-consuming and costly requirements for traditional mobile notary and notary signing agent assignments, such as travel time, fuel purchases, and having to print documents for loan signing assignments. Removing the need for notaries to drive to appointments saves time and allows them to schedule more assignments per day, which in turn means more income.

The types of businesses who will come to benefit from a RON include, but are not limited to;

- Attorney and law firms, the benefit comes not from the ability to get their documents notarized, but to notarized documents for others more efficiently while gaining access to new clients.
- Mortgage companies, RON eliminates the need for all parties to be in the same room and allows for the mortgage closing process to be completed much faster. And in a fast moving market, the efficiencies created by a streamlined process for RON can make a big difference.
- Real Estate Companies, faster and more efficient closings.
- The medical field, hospitals use notaries in hiring staff to notarize background checks and other internal documents.
- Construction companies, use notaries for permit applications, building plan requests, contracts and background checks.
- Insurance companies use notaries for a variety of purposes in administering and closing out of internal transactions.
- Small business owners have little time to meet in-person with a notary. This proposal would allow these owners to conduct any notarial act virtually and not lose a step in their day to day running of their small business.

In closing, we would like to reiterate that in 40 states who have passed this law it appears to be working effectively in those states. In fact, most, if not all states have only seen commercial and financial benefit in allowing for RON. We expect Connecticut to incur the same benefit from passing a RON act.

For these reasons we respectfully request the committee to favorably pass a RON proposal. I would like to thank the committee for its consideration of this testimony.